

some of which I've tried and failed on because of a stiff by a partisan Congress, and some of which we will try again, and add to that additional ones that I've been listening to around this table. So, we're going to go, and go forth in this State of the Union.

Then I also took on board this comment about needing to follow that up. And what we can get done in an election year, I don't know. But I'll conclude this way: Without having it sound like Mrs. Rose Scenario, this is New Hampshire. You've done a lot; you've accomplished a lot. And this State is going to pull out of this. This national economy is going to pull out of this. You look back in history of this country; it always has, and it will.

So, my message without, as I say, just being euphorically optimistic, is that in place there are some fundamentals that we haven't talked about today. Somebody ought to—the market's seeing them, incidentally. What are they? They are: Interest rates are down. Inflation, the cruelest tax of all, is down. Unfortunately, part of the reason is economic growth is so slow. But nevertheless, that is down. Inventories are in fair shape. And I think most people here understand that. We are making progress on access to foreign markets. The exports are vibrant.

Couple those with the bad news, and we all know what that is, of unemployment and, somebody put their finger on it, confidence, the confidence factor. I mean, we had national unemployment at 10.7 percent in about 1981 or 1982, and confidence was higher then than it is now. People were say-

ing, "Hey, tomorrow is going to be better."

So, I don't want to be the cheerleader saying tomorrow is going to be better. I do think the economy is going to come out of it. But I need the help of sound-thinking people to resist the siren call of protection, to resist some of these quick political appeal taxing schemes that may get you a vote or two, but will do nothing to stimulate jobs, investment, and economic growth.

And so, I came here to ask for support in this very important field, as well as to listen to the heartbeat of this State that I do feel Barbara and I both know. Somebody mentioned her, and I am very proud of what she is doing, not just because she knows how to handle her husband when he throws up—[laughter]—but she is expressing something that I think the people of New Hampshire understand. And that is love of family, faith, determination, helping kids—taking an AIDS baby and holding it in her arms and say, "Hey, we need a little compassion and understanding on all this." And I have a very comfortable feeling that people here know that we do feel a part of this State.

In any event, that's what I'd say in conclusion. And thank you all very, very much. I've learned a lot.

Note: The President spoke at 8:52 a.m. at the Pease Air National Guard Base. In his remarks, he referred to J. Bonnie Newman, former Assistant to the President for Management and Administration, and Ruth L. Griffin, member of the Governor's Council.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at a Town Hall Meeting in Exeter, New Hampshire

January 15, 1992

The President. I am very, very pleased to be back. Mike, how are you? This guy meets me at Pease every time I come in there. [Laughter] Exeter rose-grower.

Let me just say how really pleased I am to be here and to thank you for turning out. I want to make a couple of comments,

and then it's mainly questions. Isn't it, Judd? First, I want to thank the Governor for being at my side. You know my and Barbara's affection for Governor Judd Gregg and for Hugh and Kay, old longtime friends who stay in touch and who have kept me informed of this State—both

of them, both Greggs—of the problems that we face in this State. And I'm not talking political; I'm talking about hardship for people that are hurting.

One of the things I'm pleased to be able to do here is to at least let the people of this State know that even though I am President and do have two or three other responsibilities, that when people are hurting, we care. We get the message there. We read the mail. We can understand. And I just wanted to get that out loud and clear because we're in a political year, and you hear a lot of people that have discovered New Hampshire for the first time running around trying to say something different. Of course, we care.

Secondly, I am very grateful not only to the Governor but to Senator Bob Smith, Senator Rudman, who couldn't be with us—Bob Smith here today—who are doing a superb job, and then your Congressman, another dear friend, a man I respect, Bill Zeff. These are leaders in the Congress. And they talk about pledges and all of this. Let me tell you something. I took a pledge when I was sworn in, the oath of office, and what I need a pledge about is to get more Congressmen and Senators like Senator Smith and Gordon Humphrey, who was in the Senate and is supporting me, and your Congressman here, Bill Zeff, and Warren Rudman. Then we would be able to control this Federal spending better. Then we would be able to see that we get these tax improvements that I've been asking for. So that's the pledge I want, is the pledge from the people to give us more. And you're going to have to use your influence out of the State because you've done pretty darn well in the State in the United States Congress.

So, that was one point I wanted to make. The other one is that people say, "Well, you're in trouble in New Hampshire." Well, that may be. But I'm here to listen. I'm here to take the questions. I'm here to say, hey, there's a lot to do in partnership, the Federal Government, the State government where you've got superb leadership, and the people themselves.

And of course, we care. And somebody gave me the analogy of a country-western song about a train, hoping they'd see the

light at the end of the tunnel is not a train coming through. And I trumped it with saying, well, remember the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band one, if you've got any country music people here, "If you're going to see a rainbow, you've got to stand a little rain."

Well, New Hampshire has stood more than its share of rain, job—hurting and the families wondering how they're going to make their ends meet. But there is going to be a rainbow out there. There's some fundamentals that are pretty darn good. And yet, we've got to do better.

And the last point I want to make is I hope that you will listen to the State of the Union Message. I have proposed, 3 straight years, growth agenda programs. Not some fancy quick fix that's going to have broad appeal in an election time, but things that would stimulate this economy. Now we're putting this all together again with new additions to it to take these proposals to the American people. And then what I hope we can do is rally the American people and get the economy moving by sound investment-oriented treatment of the Tax Code.

That is what's needed, and still hold the line on spending. One of the few benefits of that budget agreement was that we have caps on the excesses of Federal spending, those things that can be controlled. And I want to keep them there. I do not want to bust the one restraint that is on the spenders in the United States Congress.

So having said that, I hope you'll ask the questions. We'll have a good health program that I think will have appeal to the voters here because it's family; it keeps things close to the people themselves rather than having a lot of mandated benefits out of Washington.

And this is the last point. I'm just back from a rather spectacular trip to Asia. I say spectacular—you try getting the flu at a dinner. *[Laughter]* I have a feeling the people in New England, and certainly having been a neighbor of this State for so long, understand that even Presidents get the flu. I said over there, even Democrats get it from time to time. *[Laughter]* But you've got to admit I did it in a dramatic way.

Having said that, exports account for

a tremendous amount of the growth in this country. A lot of the jobs, I think it's estimated—I was talking to Bob and Bill coming over here—35,000 to 40,000 jobs in New Hampshire related to exports. So please don't buy this protection legislation that the Democrats and some others are putting out, this idea that we can shrink back inside. I want to put America first in the sense of the values, in the sense of getting this economy to be first, but not in the sense of some kind of protection legislation that is going to shrink markets and throw the working people of New Hampshire further out of work. Let's expand these markets.

Now, fire away. Shoot. Any questions, even if they're tough ones. I know we've got a few fans in here for someone else. Bring them up.

You're second. Got the first guy, and we'll be right over.

The Economy

Q. Mr. President, first let me say the conditions in the country today, with our Government in deficit, most every State in the Union in deficit, and most every municipality in the country in deficit, never mind the households, what do we have to do—and I'm glad you brought a few—to get the Congressmen and the Senators in this country to realize when we have millions of people without jobs, homeless, without health care, and these fellows have the gall to vote themselves a raise, what can we do other than vote out every incumbent? I hate to see that, but I mean, what do we have to do to get the message across to these people in Washington?

The President. Well, I think this kind of meeting helps. Fortunately, you have congressional delegations, the ones I mentioned from this State, that understand that. They fight against the excesses of Congress.

One of the things that I proposed or seconded the motion on were these proposals that are there, and they're bipartisan, I might add, for Congress to reform itself in terms of proliferation of committees and needing reforms, Congress to adhere to the same laws that the American people have to adhere to. One of the comments that I've made after the Clarence Thomas hear-

ings was that that needed to be done. They ought not to exempt themselves from the laws you and I have to honor. And this congressional delegation understands that; these people here do. So, you've got to spill over and use your influence across the border, two ways I might add, Maine and Massachusetts, good places to start. So, try that one.

But no, you've got a good point. Look, I'm not up here to assign blame. I'll take my share of the blame. I don't take it for not caring or not understanding. I do. Barbara does. I hope we have projected the family concerns that we feel. We've tried to do that in this job. But I'm not here to blame.

But I am here to remind the voters up here that in two previous State of the Unions I have proposed growth initiatives that would have stimulated the economy. Now I'm going to do it again, and this time I'm going to look the American people in the eye, as I did in the past, and say, "All right, people are hurting more now. I've just come back from the State of New Hampshire, and a lot of people are out of work. And if you really care, pass this package. Then we can put it back into politics and debate it for the rest of this political year. But get something done that's going to get the people of this State and of this country back to work." That's the approach I'm going to take.

Now, we had one here, and then I'll come over there.

AIDS

Q. We had a wonderful Surgeon General who led us in health care in the man of Dr. Chick Koop.

The President. Yes.

Q. Can he help us with some of our health problems in the future?

The President. Yes, he can. He's a good man. I think he wants to, too. I saw him the other day. And one of the things that Dr. Koop, who came into office and people said, "Well, this guy's a little conservative for the national agenda." He wasn't; very sensitive guy. One of the things that he has done—and this is a sensitive subject; it's on my mind again because yesterday I met with

Earvin “Magic” Johnson—is to project the idea that treating AIDS is a health problem.

We are concerned about it. We care about it. When Barbara holds an AIDS baby in her arms, she’s trying to express the compassion that both of us feel. When I go out to NIH and meet with those people that are afflicted with it—we have to do it on a health problem: Prevention, research and development, caring, making people understand this now is a national health problem.

And Magic, who’s on that Commission, following in the footsteps of the education that Chick Koop has put forward to the beginning, is saying, “Look, lifestyle’s important.” He said, “I’ve made some mistakes.” And he did. He made some big ones. But now I want to help, get this thing out for open debate, compassionate treatment as a disease, and see what we can do. Then use our office, the bully pulpit of the White House and Chick Koop and others, our new Surgeon General, to educate people. We’ve got to treat with the health aspect through prevention and research. I think he will have—we’d love to have him involved.

Health Care

Q. On the national health plan, what do you have planned as a help for the 35 million people who don’t have health insurance?

The President. The question in the back is a very important question. What are you going to do about the 35 million who don’t have health insurance? What we’ve done so far is emphasizing prevention, emphasizing inoculations and this kind of thing. Now at the State of the Union, I will have what I think is the proper, if you’ll permit me to hold back some of the details, but a comprehensive health care program that does not increase the Federal mandates but does bring protection to the numbers of people that are uninsured. Therein lies the big problem.

So, we will have a comprehensive—it’s only 2 weeks away, so stay tuned, and I think it will be done with the values I think of as New Hampshire values in mind, without busting the budget. I ask you, when you hear all these people who have just discovered New Hampshire on the road map

coming up here with these health plans, ask them what that is going to do to the people that pay the taxes, as well as those who need the health care.

So, I think we’ve got a good program, and I hope we can get the support from everybody in this room.

Yes, in the back in the middle.

Q. If I can just comment, I think we have time for about two more questions. We’d like to have everybody come up and have a chance to shake hands with the President.

The President. Anybody got a real controversial one or want to make a statement? I want some guy that really wants to be tough, some tough guy. Who is it? This guy in the middle? Yes. Who are you for, first, and then let’s hear the question. [Laughter]

Q. I don’t think you want to know.

The President. No, but really, they shouldn’t be soft balls. Call it as you see it, and you’ll get it back.

Q. I’m a registered Democrat.

The President. All right, sir.

Education

Q. I haven’t made up my mind yet.

Four years ago you proclaimed yourself the education President.

The President. Yes.

Q. Well, I’m a student at the University of New Hampshire, and to the best of my knowledge New Hampshire is 51st out of 50 States. We’re behind Puerto Rico as well, as far as State funding for education. And I just haven’t seen very much evidence of your being the education President.

The President. The man asked a very important and very fair question. In the first place, Federal spending, and I can understand why you might not sense this, is up significantly in the Department of Education. As you know, Federal spending is 6 or 7 percent of the total education budget for the country. Educational spending, leave out Federal, is also up substantially.

Here’s the good news: We do have a good program. I went to the 50 Governors. We put politics aside on this one, believe me. We’ve got the national education goals, six goals now. They were agreed by Democrats and Republicans alike. They are now encompassed in a program called America

2000, which is a national education strategy. It literally calls for revolutionizing the schools.

Yes, it requires some more Federal spending, but we're budgeting that. It requires much more participation of parents and of communities. I addressed a national Chamber meeting yesterday on it. Democrats, Republicans, liberals, conservatives coming together to say we've got to do it differently.

Please take a look at that program. It is sensible. I'm determined to keep it out of the political crosscurrent. I don't care about my personal label; I am committed to education. This program, under the able leadership of Lamar Alexander, is one of the things that is beginning to get to the American consciousness.

You and I might differ on this one; I still like the idea of parents being able to choose. When I came out of the military to the GI bill a thousand years ago nobody said, "Hey, you've got to go to school A or school B, university A or B, or high school extension program A, B, or C." The person could choose. And choice in the State of Minnesota, formerly run by a Democratic Governor, has resulted in educational excellence.

And so, one of the concepts of this is choice. Another one is doing better in math and science. Another is to continue the increases that we've already started on Head Start, ready to learn. Another one is, you're never too old to learn. Even I, and it's not just show business, have a little computer there, and I'm trying to learn it. I'm doing something, and I hope it's an example that you're never too old to learn, although I'm having a few difficulties with the cursor. [Laughter]

The thing that troubles me is I don't think that we've gotten that across. It is a good, sensible program. It's really just starting, but it holds the answer because we are not going to be as competitive in this world if we don't do better in math or science.

Another part of it is voluntary testing at the 4th, 8th, and high school level. And it's voluntary. But there's nothing wrong with testing. There's nothing wrong with standards so a school knows whether it's keeping up with other schools. We've gotten away

from that sense of discipline. Then I want the schools to be drug-free so a kid can go and learn in a safe environment.

So, those are some of the ingredients of our program called America 2000.

War on Drugs

Q. Mr. President, it seems that as the economy gets worse and worse, that more and more people are turning to the sales of drugs and more and more people are using drugs as they see the economy toughen and their families suffering. What do you propose to do about this problem because it seems to keep getting worse?

The President. Let me repeat the question because I want to argue with the premise a little bit, not totally. The premise is, it seems to be getting worse on narcotics, drugs, amongst young people, and what do you propose to do about it?

We have a national drug strategy. We are making significant if not dramatic progress amongst young people, for example, in the use of cocaine, down by 10 percent. Where we're hurting as a society is the 35 and older, kind of the addicted crowd is not shaking it.

Education is a part of it. Treatment is a part of it. Interdiction, a much more successful interdiction effort, is a part of it. But the national drug strategy is working. And then there's another ingredient to this. It's the private partnership under the leadership of a guy named Jim Burke. We're spending \$1 million—they are, not Government—\$1 million a day with, I don't know whether you've seen them, with advertisements, pro bono advertisements trying to help educate children and parents that drugs are—you know, turn off of drugs.

We are making progress. We've made big progress in marijuana, made big progress in cocaine use. And yet, we've still got a long way to go. So, we'll keep fighting the problem, but I just want to give a little hope out there that these figures are fairly encouraging in terms of the age group that you asked about.

Last pitch is this on it: I still think that the people of New Hampshire, in spite of the economic problems and being out of work, still really epitomize for a lot of the

rest of the country what Barbara and I talk about as family values. I worry about the decimation of the American family. Everything we do, like child care, we try to make it that the family has a choice, or education, that the family does.

Barbara is out there trying to get people—"Read to the kids." So, I do think that family involvement is vital to the success. The Federal Government cannot get this drug thing done by itself. We've got a program. We've got to keep the families together and the families involved in solving this. That isn't a vote-getter, and that isn't going to outpromise some Democrat halfway across the State. But it is something I feel very, very strongly about and will continue to try to help the American people understand.

You've got to read to your kids. You've got to hug them. You've got to lift them up and dust them off and put them back into the game. And if you don't do that, they drift off into some of this mire. In the inner city they need help on it, too.

[At this point, County Commissioner Maureen Barrows presented a book on the history of Exeter to the President.]

The President. Listen, I apologize, but we're really almost just getting started. This

is not show business. I mean, when a guy asked a very good question on education it gave me a chance to say what I think, but also it shows what concerns people. So I hope you don't feel this—whoops, even the guy at the end of the table here feels that it's just some kind of a useless exercise.

But message: I care. We're trying. We need help. We have had and will continue to have, I think, sound and sensible programs.

And let's not forget this: It was one year ago that I had to make a very fateful decision that affected the lives of a lot of Americans. And we saw instantly the return of American pride. It doesn't matter about how you feel about when we should have gone to war, the country came together. I want to use that same kind of leadership to bring the country together now on the social problems that affect us and on getting this economy going and getting New Hampshire back to work. And I need your help.

Thank you very, very much.

Note: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. at the Exeter Town Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Michael Dagostino, a retired rose-grower in Exeter, and Hugh and Kay Gregg, parents of Gov. Judd Gregg.

Remarks to Davidson Interior Trim Employees in Dover, New Hampshire

January 15, 1992

First, let me just say thanks for the warmth of this reception. And your chairman is just back from a trip with me abroad, and the thing got a little caught up in some of the politics of the moment, which is hard to avoid. But the concept was: Look, this isn't any time to pull back; this is a time to try to expand American markets. I am not in favor of protection in the sense of pulling away from our export markets.

So, we went over there and tried to hammer away in getting our export market extended. And one of the things that saved us in the extraordinarily difficult times that,

well, this State faces and the neighboring State of Maine, Massachusetts, and New England, and also some of the rest of the country, is our exports. So, one pitch I'd make is, no matter what your politics are, is please resist this siren's call, this wonderful call, "Well, we're going to protect." Because when you protect, you shrink the markets abroad, and you throw people at home out of work.

So that's the theme that I—take you up on your chance to say something. [*Laughter*] And the other thing, and I guess, is that